Title of the research Proposal:

'Impact Assessment of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in Three District of West Bengal'

Department of EES

PALLI SIKHA BHAVANA

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Introduction:

As per the Constitution (Article 43), "The State shall endeavour to secure, by suitable legislation or economic organisation or in any other way, to all workers, agricultural, industrial or otherwise, work, a living wage, and conditions of work ensuring a decent standard of life. The Minimum Wage Act, 1948 (Section 12.1) states "Where in respect of any scheduled employment a notification under section 5 is in force the employer shall pay to every employee engaged in a scheduled employment under him wages at a rate not less than the minimum rate of wages fixed by such notification for that class of employees in that employment without any deductions.

The 15th Indian Labour Conference (1957) defined the following norms to calculate minimum wage:

1. 3 consumption units for one earner.

2. Minimum food requirements of 2700 calories per average Indian adult.

3. Clothing requirements of 72 yards per annum per family

4. Rent corresponding to the minimum area provided for under Government's Industrial Housing Scheme.

5. Fuel, lighting and other miscellaneous items of expenditure to constitute 20% of the total Minimum Wages.

These norms were further enhanced by the Supreme Court in its judgment in the case of Reptakos Brett and Co. Vs. its workmen (1991) by an additional 25% of the total minimum wage for education, medical requirement, minimum recreation including festivals/ceremonies and provision for old age, marriage etc

However in complete disregard of the above, the daily minimum wage today in most states hovers around Rs 100, with Nagaland even lower at Rs 80 and Delhi highest at Rs. 203[i] (annexed). As per calculations done by NTUI, the daily minimum wage today, as per norms fixed in the 15th ILC, is Rs 260 in rural areas and Rs 347 in urban areas (not including rent).

The MGNREGA can be well taken as an innovative policy to boost (1) the rural economy, (2) stabilize agricultural production and (3) reduce the population pressure on urban areas for employment and thereby transform the geography of poverty. The NREGA, by providing

legal guarantee to work, marks a paradigm shift from all earlier and existing wage employment programs because it is an Act and not just a scheme.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), a central sponsored wage employment scheme, aims at providing livelihood security to the rural poor. The MGNREGA was implemented in 200 districts, in the first phase, with effect from February 2, 2006 and extended, subsequently, to additional 113 and 17 districts with effect from April 1st 2007 and May 15th 2007, respectively. The remaining districts were included under the act with effect from April 1, 2008.

Almost all the rights-related features of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA were inherited from previous wage employment programmes. The NFFWP that was implemented as a precursor to Mahatma Gandhi NREGA in 150 backward districts shared only a few critical elements, like the choice of work, and did not, have a right-based design. It neither assigned a principal role to local bodies, nor initiated a decentralised planning process. In fact, it even waived the role of the Panchayti Raj Institutions (PRIs) that they had in the SampoornaGrameenRojgarYojona (SGRY) –the other wage programme operating then. The NFFWP's primary focus was also not on employment generation. It was a programme for works related to natural resource management.

The objective of MGNREGA is to ensure livelihood security of rural people by guaranteeing at least 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

The salient features of the act are as follows:

For the first time in the history of India, every rural household will have right to livelihood through guaranteed 100 days of employment in a financial year at their own place. Every household will have right to demand 100 days employment from the government. If State Government failed to provide 100 days employment on demand to any household then compensation will be paid by the State Government to the eligible applicants subject to household entitlement in terms of un-employment allowance as per rates prescribed. Villagers themselves, not officials, will decide through Gram / Ward Sabha, the priority works to be taken up to develop their village from amongst the permissible works.

Main objectives of implementing MGNREGA are:

- Enhance livelihood security of the rural poor by generating wage employment opportunities in works that develop the infrastructure base of that particular locality;
- Rejuvenate natural resource base of the area concerned;
- Create a productive rural asset base;
- Stimulate local economy for providing wage employment;

- Ensure women empowerment.

Objective of the studies:

1. To study and evaluate the implementation process of MGNREGS;
2. To study the type and extent of resources created by MGNREGS;
3. To assess the perception of constraints regarding implementation of MGNREGS among the members of Govt. and PRI system;
4. To assess the perception about the MGNREGS among common people;
5. To assess the impact of MGNREGS on the family income;
6. To assess the impact of MGNREGS on different Rural Enterprises;
7. To assess the Social impact of MGNREGS;
8. To study and evaluate the implementation process of MGNREGS what problem have been faced to implement the other Sources of Funds

The impact on implementation of MGNREGS the following sectors are being affected by scarcity of human capital may be in form of unskilled as well as semi-skilled labour force. Previously agricultural sector, Farm and non-farm sector, Brick farm, Transportation, Mine, construction, House hold etc. also has the sufficient labour and also in agriculture a disguised unemployed labour was existed. But of late these sectors have been affected by scarcity of labour force.

In my study it may be assessed also the impact of changing pattern of livelihood. How much impact on their earnings and from this extra income are they mitigate the esteemed needs better than before, when they were engaged in work as no work no pay system.Do they have any interest to save their extra income?

As a stake holder in grass root level of a Grampanchayat may create natural resource, Infrastructural resource, Economic resource, as well as social resourceby using Unskilled, Semi-skilled and also Skilled Human resource. The study also evaluates how much resource is being developed in the Grampanchayatarea. The studies also evolve the Environmental impact as well as Social impact.

Previously as a local body, the Gram panchayat utilised minimum money for development of their society and some infrastructural work, but at present a gram panchayat is capable of crores of rupees. As a result there exists a transparency or not.Are there any constraints among the members and Govt. employees, being assessed.

Methodology:

The study will be conducted in three districts of West Bengal state. The three districts are PurbaMedinipur, Birbhum and Murshidabad. From these three districts One Sub-Division will be chosen and then from this one sub-division Two Blocks will be chosen. Out of total

Block Two Gram panchayats will be selected for data collection. 300 stake holders will be selected for this study. Data will be collected from primary sources and also from secondary sources.

Suitable sampling procedures will be adapted for the betterment of this study and also suitable statistical tools to be used whenever required.

The expected outcome:

When the Government initiate to implement some Schemes or projects for the people, there should be some positive thinking for the future. MGNREGS is also like that. This study may have outcome. It focused how much common property resources are being created, how much man days are being created by unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled labour in a financial Year. Is this programme is better than the previous programmes or not, the vulnerable community is benefitted or not, the women participation are being increased or not. Is there any better policy to overcome the on-going problems to implement the programme, if line department is not totally involved then what will be the procedure to overcome? If there will be need to Convergence to other programmes, should be assessed.

Few Key Words: MGNREGS ,wage, Employment, Scheme, Unskilled, Semi-Skilled, Skilled, Vulnerable, community, Livelihood, Fixed Assets, Government, Gram Panchayats, Programme, Natural Resource, generate, gram sabha, village, empowerment, Women empowerment.etc.

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